

Accounting Office may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(5) The Chairman of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(e) SECURITY.—(1) Members and staff of the Commission, and any experts and consultants to the Commission, shall possess security clearances appropriate for their duties with the Commission under this section.

(2) The Secretary of Defense shall assume responsibility for the handling and disposition of any information relating to the national security of the United States that is received, considered, or used by the Commission under this section.

(f) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate 45 days after the date on which the Commission submits its report under subsection (b).

(g) FUNDING.—(1) Of the amount appropriated by this Act, \$3,000,000 shall be available to the Commission to carry out this section.

(2) The amount made available by paragraph (1) shall remain available, without fiscal year limitation, until September 2005.

This Act may be cited as the "Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2004".

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REID. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate insists on its amendment and requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes on this measure.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. BURNS, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. STEVENS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. BYRD conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business until 12:45 with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I pay tribute to our two floor managers of a very important bill that I intend to support when we have a chance to reach it, which I hope will be done in the not too distant future. I commend our floor managers for the work they have done in bringing this legislation before the Senate.

There were two issues I had hoped we would have an opportunity to present to the Senate. One was an increase in the minimum wage. Another was working with the Senator from Oregon, Mr. SMITH, on the hate crimes issue. We are

hopeful to be able to address those during consideration of this legislation without taking a great deal of time.

I had intended to offer an amendment on the legislation now and was quite prepared to move ahead with a reasonable time period, up to an hour of time evenly divided. Then we could make a judgment with regard to hate crimes to enter into a similar kind of time agreement so that we would not delay the underlying legislation. But the problem we have is the leadership has decided we would defer action on the amendment until some future time. I regret that, but I understand it. It is the prerogative of the leadership. We will at that time have a chance to again raise this issue.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. KENNEDY. I am glad to yield.

Mr. REID. Before the Senator starts his statement, I wondered if the Senator would acknowledge that after the vote on the military construction appropriations bill, automatically recurring in the Senate is the bill that we have been working on for 1 day—1 day—the State Department authorization. The Senator understands that bill has not passed since 1985, principally because of being held up by the distinguished Senator from North Carolina, Mr. Helms. Does the Senator acknowledge that and also acknowledge the fact that we only had a few amendments left, one of which was the minimum wage, and we could have completed this bill in a couple of days? Will the Senator also acknowledge because of his offering a minimum wage amendment, they simply took the bill down, and we are not now able to offer the amendments? Will the Senator acknowledge that?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator from Nevada is quite correct. As our deputy leader, he has an understanding of the amendments on our side. He has correctly stated the position; that is, speaking for this side of the aisle, we are prepared to move to final passage of the legislation, but there are a few amendments, one of which is the minimum wage which, under a short time limit, can be disposed of quite rapidly. But quite frankly, we have only had 1 day of debate on the State Department authorization, and we haven't had an opportunity to raise this issue for 7 years.

I know there are those who say, let's let this issue be deferred. It has been 7 long years since we have had an increase in the minimum wage. So those individuals who are at the lowest end of the economic ladder, working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, have been losing purchasing power day in and day out. We have not increased the minimum wage in 7 years.

With all due respect to other Members of this body, it is Friday at 11 o'clock. We are prepared to debate the issue and have a vote on it. People are entitled to have an indication of what the membership wants to do.

We take this issue very seriously because of the desperate situation affecting those on the lower end of the economic ladder. Quite frankly, historically this has not been a Democratic issue. It has been a bipartisan issue.

The long history of increases in the minimum wage has been basically bipartisan. It was enacted by Franklin Roosevelt in 1938; increased by Harry Truman; increased by Dwight Eisenhower in 1955 by \$1; increased by President John Kennedy in 1961 by \$2.35; increased by Lyndon Johnson; increased by a Republican, Gerry Ford; increased by Jim Carter; increased by George Bush No. 1; increased by Bill Clinton.

Republicans and Democrats have voted for an increase in the minimum wage since 1938. It has not been a partisan issue. We find in recent times that our Republican friends have been unwilling to both support it and give us the opportunity to debate the issue.

This chart shows the long history of increases in the minimum wage as well as the amounts. Even with those kinds of increases, if you look at the purchasing power of the minimum wage, as this chart indicates, it is now at perhaps its lowest level of purchasing power, \$4.95. There was one other time when it was \$4.35. It is \$4.95 and continuing to drop, and it will reach the lowest level in terms of purchasing power since even before 1962, unless we take action.

With this amendment it would increase, in terms of purchasing power, to \$6.40, which is well below what the minimum wage has been over the period of the last 40 years. So this is a very modest program. It would increase to \$6.65 in today's dollars.

I want to share with the Senate what the minimum wage is in relation to the issues of poverty in the United States. Look at this chart. Here is the poverty level. Just \$14,500 is the poverty level. The blue indicator is what has happened to the minimum wage in relation to poverty.

Most Americans believe that if people are going to work hard 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, they should not live in poverty. They should not live in poverty. In the wealthiest, most successful economy in the world, this is what is happening. We find that the minimum wage workers are well below the poverty level.

As a result, every day that we delay we see minimum wage workers falling further behind. All of the gains since the 1997 increase in the minimum wage already have been lost.

What are we talking about? We are talking about an increase of \$1.50, 75 cents this year, 75 cents next year. What does that amount to? That amounts to \$3,000 over the course of a year. Translated, it means 15 months of groceries, 8 months of rent, 7 months of utilities, and the full tuition for a child of the minimum wage worker. This is what we are talking about. We are talking about groceries; we are talking

about rent; we are talking about utilities; we are talking about education at this time.

We have had a good deal of debate in terms of the tax cuts and what that will do for the wealthiest individuals. This is the kind of difference that this will make over the period of 1 year.

Let me just put this in some perspective about what the increase in the minimum wage will mean in terms of the total combined income for workers over the course of the year because you will hear the argument: Can we do this now because of the issues of inflation? I would like to anticipate that argument. And then: Can we afford to do it in anticipation of the problems of high unemployment?

First on the issue of an increase of \$1.50 to workers, it is vital to minimum wage workers; it is a drop in the bucket in the national payroll. All Americans combined earn \$5.4 trillion a year. At a \$1.50 minimum wage increase this will be less than one-fifth of 1 percent of the national payroll. The idea that we are contributing to inflation just does not carry.

I will take a moment of the Senate's time to look over what has happened, the increase in the minimum wage as to the issues of employment and unemployment. An argument will be made: Look the Democrats make a good deal about the unemployment that we are facing today. If we pass this increase in the minimum wage, are we going to increase unemployment? All you have to do is look at the various studies which I will speak to later in the presentation. But I would like to just look back over the history of the last increase in the minimum wage. If you look at 1996, the minimum wage was increased to \$4.75. In 1996, we had unemployment just above 5.3 percent. So the increase in the minimum wage was going up during this time while the unemployment was coming down.

Then the second phase of the increase to the minimum wage which we passed was September 1997. That raised it from \$4.75 to \$5.15. The chart shows unemployment continuing to decline. Study after study indicates that this it virtually has no effect or impact on the unemployment rate.

Let me just say, the issue in the increase of the minimum wage is a women's issue because the great majority of the people who receive the minimum wage are women. This increase in the minimum wage is a children's issue because a many of the women who are receiving the minimum wage have children. And it is about their quality of life and that of their families. It is a civil rights issue because forty percent of those individuals who earn the minimum wage are men and women of color.

Finally, this increase in the minimum wage is a fairness issue. Americans understand fairness. They understand if you are going to work hard 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, you should not live in poverty.

That is the case. This is a no brainer. We do not have to spend a lot of time in debate. We voted on this. It is as old an issue as 1938. We can vote on this. It is a simple issue of whether this institution believes in fairness and decency for some of the hardest working men and women in our country. And it is about time that we do it.

From our point of view as the proponents, we are prepared to vote at any time that the other side will give us the opportunity to do so.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. KENNEDY. I yield.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Massachusetts for continuing to raise this issue, sadly, for 7 years. Unfortunately, we have not done our part to raise the minimum wage, but I would go to the point that the Senator from Massachusetts raised.

Last week I went to a summer feeding program for children who ordinarily get school lunches. These are struggling families in my city of Chicago. I sat down at a table with a young African American girl, second grader, named Sharya, and I said to her: "What did you have for dinner last night?" She said: "Well, my mom was working late and she got home after I went to sleep. I had a bowl of cereal for dinner."

The point I am making to the Senator, and I ask him if he would return and tell us the impact, here is a young girl being raised by a mother who is probably working two jobs because we will not increase the minimum wage. The point being made by the Senator from Massachusetts is, we are not talking about welfare recipients; we are talking about working people who get up and go to work every day to sometimes two jobs. Sometimes they are invisible to our lives. These are the people who are washing the dishes in the kitchens, busing the tables, and cleaning our rooms.

I ask the Senator from Massachusetts, is this not first and foremost a family issue in terms of dignity for working families and people who are trying to keep their kids well fed and clothed and keep them together? I ask the Senator from Massachusetts, how in this great nation, when we are giving away trillions of dollars in tax cuts to the wealthiest people in this country, can we not afford 50 cents or a dollar an hour for people who are struggling to try to keep their families together?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator has put his finger on one of the key factors and legitimate reasons for the increase in the minimum wage, because this is a family issue—the number of minimum wage workers working two jobs, some even three jobs, the testimony that we have had where the only times that young parents see their children together may be for a few hours on a Sunday morning.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time in morning business has expired.

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask unanimous consent for 10 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. KENNEDY. Let me continue, if I may. So this is a family issue. It is about, as the Senator knows, the numbers of mothers and fathers who have to look into the eyes of their children and say, "No, you can't get a little birthday present," or, "No, you can't go to the skating party where all the other children are going." "No, you can't do this because we haven't got the resources." That is happening every day. These are hard-working men and women. It is the family issue.

As the Senator has mentioned, who are these minimum wage workers? These minimum wage workers are teacher's aides.

We say we care about education. We know the challenges we are facing on education. We know the particular stress that is taking place in the States on education. These workers are teacher's aides. We say we care about our senior citizens, men and women who have sacrificed. They ought to have their golden years in peace and dignity. These are workers in nursing homes. They are the recipients. They are taking care of the parents and the grandparents in this country.

These are the men and women who clean the great facilities where the American enterprise continues to grow and strive throughout this country. As the Senator points out, these are hard-working men and women. This is a family issue. These are decent, hard-working fellow Americans, and they have seen their purchasing power fall and fall.

If my colleagues look over at this chart, it indicates where the disparity has been going in the United States over the past years. As we all know, the wealthy are getting wealthier and the hard-working Americans who are at the lower rung of the economic ladder are falling further behind.

We know we have the earned-income tax credit that assists families with children, and that is important. But if one is talking about a single parent with a single child, the minimum wage makes all the difference in the world.

Mr. DURBIN. May I ask the Senator one other question. Is it not part of an interesting pattern that when we talk about the economy, jobs, and growth, we talk about tax breaks primarily for wealthy people, but when we talk about struggling working families, we cannot seem to find an increase in the minimum wage, we cannot find a child tax credit for people in lower income categories? Why is it that this administration, this Government, turns a blind eye to the people who are struggling with the lower income jobs, the middle-income jobs, really the backbone of America's economy, people who need the help the most? Does not this minimum wage issue tell us the same story?

There is absolutely no recognition or sensitivity by this administration and the White House to these people. Here we stand, 2½ years into this administration, and I ask the Senator from Massachusetts, has President Bush suggested at any point in those 2½ years any increase in the minimum wage to help people who are struggling to survive in this tough economy?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is quite correct. There has been no mention of this by this administration. We have had other administrations that at least advocated some increase, and eventually we were able to work out an accommodation over a period of time. This administration, as the Senator has pointed out, has not only not mentioned the increase in the minimum wage and not only has resisted the tax credit for children but also put in new rules and regulations on the earned-income tax credit that are going to make it more difficult for the same individuals at the bottom end of the economic ladder who have children, who are working hard, playing by the rules, to be able to participate in this program.

The Senator is quite correct that the neediest Americans, the ones who are working trying to make a living for themselves, trying to bring up children, facing the most serious economic challenges of our time, are basically shunted aside and ignored by this administration.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for four questions?

Mr. KENNEDY. Yes.

Mr. REID. No. 1, the Senator has mentioned, and I want to ask if the Senator will emphasize this, that the minimum wage is a program in which 40 percent of the people who draw minimum wage are women; is that true?

Mr. KENNEDY. Sixty-three percent of those who receive the minimum wage are women.

Mr. REID. It is 20 percent more than my statistics indicate, and I am sure the Senator is right. For the majority of those women, that is the majority of the money they get for themselves and their family. Do they depend on that totally, is what I am trying to ask.

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is correct. More often than not, they not only work at one minimum-wage job, they work probably at two. So they are working not only 40 hours a week but more often 80 hours a week.

Mr. REID. I ask the Senator from Massachusetts, also, is it not true that we, the Democrats, have tried for 7 years to get an increase in the minimum wage? Is that true?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is correct. We have not been able to get a vote on this issue of an increase in the minimum wage over that period of time. I must say if it had not been for the persistence of our Democratic leaders, Senator REID and Senator DASCHLE, we would not have gotten a vote on it this time. If it had been up to the other side, they would have said, no, we only want the relevant amend-

ments and we can wait for consideration of an increase in the minimum wage. These workers cannot wait. They do not need to wait.

During this period of time, we have found the opportunity to raise our own salaries on five different occasions. We have not found the time to raise the minimum wage, but we have raised the Senate salaries on five different occasions.

I think that is something the American people can understand as well. We are doing something for these Members—and I do not begrudge it, and I voted for those increases—but the fact is we should not leave these people behind.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator also acknowledge that even during the years President Clinton was President, which includes part of the 7 years, we were stopped by the Republicans through procedural measures from having an up-or-down vote on the minimum wage? Is that a fair statement?

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, the Senator probably remembers, we had to file cloture on this in order to try to get a vote, and during that period of time we were able always to get a majority of the Senate, some Republicans and Democrats, but we were blocked because we could not get the 60 votes. We were required to get the 60 votes for the consideration, and we were denied that opportunity.

The Senator remembers very well, as I do, that we were effectively blocked from taking action on the minimum wage.

Mr. REID. The final question I ask my friend from Massachusetts: The minimum wage, I am confident the Senator would acknowledge, is not some wild-eyed idea that someone came up with in the last 5 or 10 years. It is true, is it not, that the minimum wage legislation was initiated during the Great Depression? We have had a minimum wage, and it has been increased, for approximately 70 years. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is quite correct. Absolutely correct.

Mr. REID. So for approximately a tenth of that time, we have been blocked from giving these hard-working men and women, who are not drawing welfare, they are not out being bums and in gangs, they are people of all ages who want to work for a living and are doing the best they can, they are working at minimum wage, and what we want to do, and we are prevented from doing because of the majority, is simply have a vote to allow these people to have a raise in their minimum wage, their basic wage that these people depend on to make it through life.

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, the Senator has made the compelling case on this. We have heard these arguments against it, that it adds to inflation, adds to unemployment, that it works to the disadvantage of minority youth. We had that argument. We can show the statistics that that is not true.

They say, well, what we really need is not an increase in minimum wage but we need an increase in the training wage. We have said, fine, we will add an increase in the training wage. We are prepared to meet any legitimate argument, but we do believe that people who have been working, and working hard and playing by the rules and have waited 7 years and have seen the reduction in terms of the purchasing power, are entitled to at least an accounting in the Senate. That is what we want to find out.

This is not an issue that takes a great deal more discussion and debate. Members knew about the minimum wage before they were elected to the Senate. It is an old issue, older than most of us in this Chamber. People are familiar with it. They have heard the arguments. It is not a new issue, but it is an issue of fairness and decency. It is an issue that should be acted on.

To reiterate, millions of minimum wage workers are suffering because of the continuing weak economy. For years, they have not had any wage increase at all, because Congress continues to refuse to raise the minimum wage.

Even in this troubled economy, Congress has not hesitated to raise its own pay. It is only fair that we raise the minimum wage, too.

That is why I am proposing this amendment to enact a long-overdue increase in the minimum wage. My amendment will raise the current minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour by 75 cents this year and another 75 cents next year, bringing it up to \$6.65 an hour.

We know that poverty has doubled among full-time, year-round workers since the late 1970s. Nearly 33 million people live in poverty today in this country, and an unfairly low minimum wage is a large part of the problem.

Congress has not acted to raise the minimum wage in 7 years. Minimum wage employees working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, earn only \$10,700 a year. That's \$4,500 below the poverty line today for a family of three.

The current minimum wage fails to provide enough income for minimum wage workers to afford adequate housing in any area of this country. A worker earning the minimum wage in Georgia or Illinois, or many other areas of the country, would have to work more than 100 hours a week to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

Every day the minimum wage is not increased, it continues to lose value, and workers fall farther and farther behind. Minimum wage workers have lost all of their gains since we last raised the minimum wage in 1997. Today, the real value of the minimum wage is \$3.00 below what it was in 1968. To have the purchasing power it had in 1968, the minimum wage would have to be more than \$8 an hour today, not \$5.15.

It is shameful that Members of Congress have raised their own pay by \$21,000 in the last 7 years—almost twice what a minimum wage workers makes

in a year—without giving the Nation's lowest paid workers any increase at all.

Nearly 7 million workers would directly benefit from the proposed minimum wage increase, and many of them are parents and the sole breadwinners in their families.

The minimum wage is an economic issue, but it is also a woman's issue. Sixty-three percent of the workers who would benefit from minimum wage increase are women and one-third of those women are mothers.

The minimum wage is also a civil rights issue. An increase in the minimum wage boosts the wage levels of people of color—who are often segregated into low-paying jobs. Millions of African American and Hispanic workers will benefit from an increase in the minimum wage.

Raising the minimum wage is a family issue, too. It is so low that many workers must work long hours to make ends meet. The increase in work hours has a damaging impact on every aspect of life: on families, on personal time, and on employers. At least one in five workers has a work week that exceeds 50 hours.

According to the Families and Work Institute, three out of the top four things that children would most like to change about their working parents are these: They wish their parents were less stressed out by work; they wish they were less tired because of their work; and they wish they could spend more time with them.

Employers as well pay a high price for overworked employees. Productivity suffers, and so does turnover. Overworked employees are more susceptible to illness. They need more sick days, and they are less productive on the job.

Raising the minimum wage obviously will not solve all these problems. But a higher minimum wage may mean that employees can work a little less, and have a few more hours a week of family time and personal time.

Minimum wage earners are forced to make impossible choices—between paying the rent and buying groceries or between paying the heating bill and buying new clothes.

It has been too long since Congress last acted. History clearly shows that raising the minimum wage has not had a negative impact on jobs, employment, or inflation. In the four years after the last minimum wage increase, the economy had its strongest growth in three decades. Nearly 11 million new jobs were added, at a rate of more than 200,000 per month.

A fair increase in the minimum wage is long overdue. How can Congress keep saying no, when more and more workers cannot make ends meet? Can't we all at least agree on this basic principle—that no one who works for a living should have to live in poverty?

HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION

Mr. SMITH. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. KENNEDY. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. I ask the Senator, on the other issue he raised, to put a bipartisan cast to the conversation, is it not true that the Senator and I are the co-sponsors—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. KENNEDY. If I could have 30 more seconds on this. I ask unanimous consent for an additional 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. I see my friend and colleague, Senator SMITH, who hopefully will address another issue of hate crimes legislation, for which we have had support and we are also very hopeful of getting a vote on as well.

I see my friend and colleague from New Jersey, Senator CORZINE, and my friend and colleague from Louisiana, as well. I understand my time on morning business has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. SMITH. I will not be long. I was mindful Senator KENNEDY was speaking to the issue of hate crimes. I was going to ask him the question that I think he would agree with. We acknowledge at a surface level the argument could be made that hate crimes do not belong on a State Department authorization bill. That is the case at a surface level, but it is also true that our foreign policy should reflect the values of the American people. The values of the American people say the war on terrorism is waged not just abroad but here at home.

Our country is plagued with hate crimes. Some people will say all crimes are hateful, but what Senator KENNEDY and I are focusing on are those crimes which target a community of vulnerable people—whether race, religion, gender, disabled, and additionally those whose sexual orientation is different from the majority.

It is an incredible tragedy that the Federal Government has not been allowed to participate in the hate crimes prosecution in places where sometimes local police departments are overwhelmed by national media, or places where the prosecutions do not occur as they ought to.

Senator KENNEDY and I are proposing as part of this bill we take up the issue of hate crimes. This institution has passed this issue before by large majorities. We ought to do so again.

Many in this country have strong feelings on the issue of gay and lesbian rights—some for, some against—but it is my position that we all ought to be opposed to hate crimes and be prepared to do something about it. I will never forget the enormous tragedy of the murder of Matthew Shepherd and the impact that had on me when I considered the Federal Government was not permitted to help the Laramie police department that was overwhelmed by national media; the Federal Government had to be silent because we had no statutory authority—not to take

over State or local effort—to help them in this effort. As a moral principle the Federal Government ought to show up in the prosecution and pursuit of those who commit hate crimes. These are happening far too often.

Sometimes those on my side will say: This is not consistent with a family value. There is nothing about hate crimes that represents a legitimate family value. Some of the things that are held up as family values are phony values. Marriage is one of those that is a very real family value. We ought to have a debate on that, too. But when it comes to hate crimes, public protection for all of our citizens, we need to act.

Senator KENNEDY and I have both said to the managers of this bill we would rather not bring it up on this bill. It is a fact this authorization is probably one of the few that will make it through in the balance of this session of Congress. We do not think this should wait any longer. We think terrorism abroad, our foreign policy opposing terrorism, ought to be reflected by the values of the American people who oppose terrorism at home. Hate crimes are a very real form of terrorism. We ought to do something about it. The Federal Government ought to show up to work and we ought to come together around a real family value which is the opposition to hate crimes.

I have said before, if you want to talk to me about sin, come with me to church. If you want to talk with me about public policy for all of us sinners, let's go to the Senate and make sure we provide protection for all of America's children. Hate crimes is the vehicle.

The majority leader is working with Senator KENNEDY and I to get us the opportunity before the August recess to have a period of debate—it need not be long—and a straight up-or-down vote so we can get this moving in the process, consistent with America's values abroad so we are consistent at home fighting terrorism.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I commend my friend from Oregon who has been steadfast in his support on the hate crimes legislation and has really provided extraordinary leadership both in the Senate and nationally in helping us to get to the point where we will have a real opportunity to take action. His involvement and work has been enormously important and added a very significant dimension to the movement of the legislation.

Senator SMITH has just stated very eloquently the fundamental reasons for this legislation and has also talked about why this is related to the current measure before the Senate, the State Department authorization.

The challenge we are facing around the world in terms of terrorism and violence is rooted in hatred and bigotry.